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Want to dominate the court? Get our 6-day off-season strength training program and become the strongest player on the team! This printable workout lets you track your progress right on the sheet. Download it now in PDF form! Anyone can improve their physical fitness for basketball, even in a short period. For example, the time between fall classes starting and the first preseason games is only six weeks. There's always room for improvement. If your training consists only of skill development drills or pick-up games, you won't reach the intensity of competitive games. You need sport-specific strength training (Montgomery et al., 2010). Don't get tempted to play pick-up or just work on skills - commit to a strength training schedule earlier in the day: at lunch or before stepping on the court. Scholarship basketball players spend almost forty hours weekly on their sport, including games, practices, and training sessions (O'Shaughnessy, 2011). To get to that level, you need to be willing to put in extra time in the weight room. Professional players who make exceptional improvements are those who commit to developing their bodies during the off-season (Haley, 2015). When creating a training program, consider the primary muscles for basic basketball activities: running (hips, quads, calves, hamstrings), jumping (hips, glutes, quads), shooting (triceps, deltoids), and rebounding (pectoralis, trapezius, biceps) (Cole & Panariello, 2016). A strong core is essential for balance and physical play. Perform one or two sets per exercise with a weight that makes you fatigued within ten to twelve reps. Rest one or two minutes between sets and exercises (Stein, 2015). Don't forget to progress continually - small increases in weight from week to week can lead to big differences at the end of a few weeks (Thom, 2013). Strength without stability and speed is nothing. Being in basketball shape is different from being in gym shape, so continue sport-specific conditioning (Stein, 2015). Speed training develops power, which lets strength training do its job. In order to boost performance in basketball, athletes should incorporate various types of training into their routine, including speed and plyometric workouts alongside strength training. A study found that participants who completed an eight-week plyometric training program experienced faster sprint times (Cissik, 2017). Interestingly, the aquatic plyometric program showed a greater increase in leg strength compared to traditional land-based programs (Arazi & Asadi, 2011, p. 105). Some notable basketball players, such as DeMar DeRozan and LeBron James, attribute their improvements to rigorous early morning workouts that combine weight room and pool sessions (Postmedia Network, 2016). Given the stop-and-start nature of basketball, developing a strong aerobic base is crucial. Running intervals between eighty-five to ninety percent of maximum heart rate for distances of one hundred to five hundred meters can improve VO2 Max results by about ten percent over a period of a month and a half (Stone & Kilding, 2009, p. 620). Concurrent strength and aerobic training can further boost performance. Small-sided games in pick-up settings, such as 3-on-3 or 4-on-4, can also induce sufficient heart rate intensities to improve aerobic conditioning (Stone & Kilding, 2009, p. 627). Social norms can play a significant role in motivating team members. Working out in a group and keeping a log visible for everyone else to see can be highly effective (Halpern, 2015, p. 108). Sharing workout progress on social media and acknowledging teammates' efforts can further motivate individuals. Setting goals ahead of time rather than deciding daily whether to work out can increase commitment (Halpern, 2015, p. 199). Goal setting in basketball can also be beneficial. Focusing on improving specific areas, such as weight lifting or sport-specific benchmarks, does not negatively impact non-targeted areas (Swain & Jones, 1995, p. 60). Publicly committing to teammates and friends can also increase motivation and reduce the likelihood of backing out (Gallagher, 2017). For a comprehensive list of exercises that can be completed in a basic weight room, refer to the High School Weight Room Workout page. The essential athletic abilities required for basketball include speed, agility, strength, and endurance. As demonstrated in studies such as "The effect of aquatic and land plyometric training on strength, sprint, and balance in young basketball players" by Arazi and Asadi (2011), these attributes play a crucial role in a player's performance. To improve these abilities, various workout routines have been developed. For example, a 12-week all-star training program, as shared by Kyle Lowry, focuses on building strength and speed through exercises like squats, deadlifts, and plyometrics. LeBron James also shares his pre-playoffs preparation workouts, highlighting the importance of endurance and agility. Additionally, research such as "The Physical and Physiological Demands of Basketball Training and Competition" by Montgomery et al. (2010) emphasizes the significance of conditioning exercises in basketball training. The article also touches on how top players like DeMar DeRozan maintain their physical fitness through rigorous workout routines. First and foremost, it's essential to start with a manageable training program that can be gradually progressed upon. Emphasis should be placed on mastering proper form and technique before moving on to more advanced aspects such as adding weight or increasing the number of sets. It is also crucial to warm up thoroughly before each session and cool down afterwards. Continuing with your aerobic interval and sport-specific training, you should divide your workout into several categories: upper body weight training, lower body plyometric exercises, core/core hip exercises, and recovery days for injury prevention and regeneration activities. Upper Body Weight Training typically involves 1-2 sets of 10-12 reps per exercise, including Bench Press, Bicep Curl, Chest Fly, Front Lat Raise, and more. Lower Body Plyometric Exercises include Box Jumps, Depth Jumps, Lateral Bounds, and others, performed in 3 sets of 10-12 jumps. Core/Core Hip Exercises, such as Clamsheels, Fire Hydrants, Plank, Side Plank, Russian Twists, Dead Bug, are done for 30 seconds each. When it comes to off days, consider engaging in recovery and regeneration activities, focusing on injury prevention, hip mobility, core strength, and stability. Training for speed is recommended 3-4 times a week. The speed training includes ¾ court sprints from baseline to foul line, decelerate and walk back to the starting point, aiming for 8-10 sprints at 85% intensity with thirty seconds rest in between. Lateral slides before sprinting can also be added for an additional challenge.